



County of Los Angeles
DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES

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DAVID SANDERS, Ph.D.
Director

May 17, 2006

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To: Mayor Michael D. Antonovich
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From: David Sanders, Ph.D.
Director

MAY 17, 2005 BOARD AGENDA ITEM #2 - MOTION BY SUPERVISOR GLORIA MOLINA RE: ERCP MONTHLY LENGTHS OF STAY

INTRODUCTION

On May 17, 2005, the Board instructed the Director of the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) to:

- Report back to the Board within seven (7) days on immediate steps taken to address Emergency Response Command Post (ERCP) "overstays", including increasing the availability of emergency shelter beds;
- Provide monthly reports for the next year, which track the numbers of emergency shelter beds and the length of time children spend waiting for placement;
- Provide a 30-day report regarding possible short-term and long-term solutions, with attention to placement needs of the more difficult-to-place children and youth;
- Work in collaboration with the Association of Community Human Services Agencies (ACHSA) and group homes on the assessment of placement processes to identify and resolve barriers to successful placement of these youths.

SCOPE OF PROBLEM

Most often, the population of children described in the ERCP lengths-of-stay reports are "difficult-to-place" children with current behaviors that present serious risks to their health and safety, such as, violent interactions with others, illegal drug consumption, gang involvement or chronic runaway episodes. This population also includes teenage parents

and dependent children over the age of 18 years who do not meet the licensing provision for residence in our emergency shelters.

I am pleased to inform you that in February 2006, the ERCP continued to make good progress. There were 55 children that were served at the Emergency Response Command Post. Of the 55 children (100%) served, 43 children (78%) were placed within 4 hours and only 12 children (22%) of the 55 children exceeded the four-hour time frame.

In March 2006 there were 51 children that were served at the ERCP. Of the 51 children (100%), 43 children (84%) were placed within 4 hours and only 8 children (16%) of the 51 children exceeded the four-hour time frame. Of these 8 children, 1 child stayed at ERCP an inordinate amount of time.

Finally, April 2006 has been the best month since the initial report in May 2005. During the month of April 2006, there were a total of 48 children served at the ERCP. Of the 48 children (100%) served, 47 children (98%) were placed within 4 hours and only 1 child (2%) exceeded the four-hour time frame.

Those children that remained at the ERCP over four hours have general placement issues; including defiant behaviors, illicit drug use, psychiatric problems and chronic run away behavior, identified as the major reasons for the delay in finding suitable placements in a timely manner.

SHORT-TERM SOLUTIONS

The following additional short-term solutions/steps have been taken:

1. DCFS has scheduled meetings to recruit emergency shelter care for foster parents to care for teens and sibling groups.
2. DCFS placed Resource Utilization Management (RUM) staff on call, beginning Thursday at 5:00 p.m. through Monday at 2:00 a.m., to assist the ERCP in locating and matching placements for difficult-to-place youths.
3. DCFS has primarily focused on maintaining current bed availability.

With the expansion of licensed foster home beds, FFA beds and Group Home beds, we have sufficient capacity to assure that few, if any children, will need to await placement at the ERCP for no longer than eight (8) hours. Coupled with the long-term solutions that follow I believe we will be able to further reduce the length-of-stay for youths at the ERCP.

LONG-TERM SOLUTIONS

The following additional long-term solution/steps have been taken:

1. DCFS staff met with representatives of SEIU Local 535 to expand input and consider work-place related perspectives as solutions are proposed.

On January 26, 2006 and again on May 8, 2006, the Department met with ACHSA to discuss the status of the three DCFS/ACHSA program development groups. In view of the dramatic decrease in the number of "overstays" at ERCP, the Department is currently re-evaluating the need to contract specifically for "Crisis Beds."

2. Girls and Boys Town is scheduled to open their new 16-bed facility in Compton on September 2006. They are willing to tailor their program to meet our shelter care needs.
3. The Program Coordinator has and is actively recruiting foster parents at the Mi Casa Su Casa Conferences on:

04/13/2006 and 04/14/2006 at City of Industry
04/19/2006 and 04/20/2006 at Los Angeles LAX area
05/17/2006 and 05/18/2006 at Lancaster
05/25/2006 and 05/26/2006 at Cerritos

4. To ensure that there is a sufficient pool of 24/7 emergency shelter care resources for DCFS children/youth, Out of Home Care and Emergency Shelter Care Program is performing the following:
 - Alerting all CSWs, SCSWs and the ARAs of children on their caseloads that are placed in 14-day shelter care foster homes.
 - Providing the Emergency Response Command Post and Resource Utilization Management with updated information regarding emergency shelter care placement vacancies.
 - Alerting all CSWs, SCSWs and ARAs, as appropriate, of children on their caseloads that are placed in a 30-day shelter care group homes.

DCFS scheduled the following Foster Parent recruitment meetings for 2006:

02/22/2006 – Century Office
02/23/2006 – Belvedere Office
02/28/2006 – Glendora Office

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02/28/2006 – Santa Fe Springs
03/01/2006 – North Hollywood Office
03/22/2006 – Belvedere Office
03/23/2006 – Santa Fe Springs Office
03/29/2006 – El Monte Telstar Office
03/30/2006 – El Monte Telstar Office
05/29/2006 – Glendora Office
06/01/2006 – Hawthorne Office
06/06/2006 – Glendora Office

SUMMARY

There continues to be remarkable progress at the Emergency Response Command Post. For the month of April 2006, a total of 48 children were served at the Emergency Response Command Post. The attached chart provides you with the monthly tracking for 48 children who had ERCP contact in April 2006. This information is based on data from the ERCP logs from April 1, 2006 through April 30, 2006. During this reporting period, 48 children were served at the Emergency Response Command Post. Of the 48 (100%) children served, 47 (98%) were placed within 0 to 4 hours, and 1 (2%) of the 48 children exceeded the four-hour time frame.

As indicated above, the Department's performance with the support of community partners, clearly demonstrates the significant strides made in resolving the "overstay" problems identified a year ago by your Board. In view of these accomplishments, unless directed otherwise, we will provide you with semi-annual status reports.

The Department remains committed to the goal of ensuring the prompt response and placement of children who are brought to the Emergency Response Command Post.

If you have any questions, please call me or your staff may contact Helen Berberian, Board Relations Manager at (213) 351-5530.

DS:AW:eaf

Attachment

c: Chief Administrative Officer
County Counsel
Executive Officer, Board of Supervisors

EMERGENCY RESPONSE COMMAND POST'S MONTHLY OVERSTAY REPORT – MINORS AT ERCP APRIL 2006

Numbers of children and youth who stayed 4 hours and longer by age:

Total: 1 (02%)

Hours	0-10 years	11-14 years	15-18 years	19 and over	TOTALS	
0 to 4	19	6	22	0	47	98%
4 to 8	0	1	0	0	1	2%
9 to 13	0	0	0	0	0	
14 to 19	0	0	0	0	0	
20 to 23	0	0	0	0	0	-
24 to 28	0	0	0	0	0	-
29 to 32	0	0	0	0	0	-
33 and over	0	0	0	0	0	-
TOTALS	19(40%)	7(14%)	22(46%)		48	100%

Children and youth's placement type prior to stay at ERCP:

Placement	0-10 years	11-14 years	15-18 years	19 and over	TOTALS	
Home of parent	0	0	0	0	0	
Adoptive parent	0	0	0	0	0	
Home of Relative	0	0	0	0	0	
Foster Home	0	0	0	0	0	
Group Home	0	1	0	0	1	100%
AWOL	0	0	0	0	0	
Probation	0	0	0	0		
TOTALS	0	1 (100%)	0	0	1	100%

Numbers of Children and Youth who came to ERCP by age and Gender: Total: 48

0-10 years		11-14 years		15-18 years		19 and over	
19 (40%)		7(15%)		22 (45%)		(%)	
M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
11	8	3	4	10	12	0	0

Children and Youth's placement type following their stay at ERCP:

Placement	0-10 years	11-14 years	15-18 years	19 and over	TOTALS	
Home of Parent	0	0	0	0	0	
Home of Relative	0	0	0	0	0	
Foster Home	0	0	0	0	0	
Group Home	0	1	0	0	1	100%
AWOL	0	0	0	0	0	
Hospital	0	0	0	0		
TOTALS	0	1 (100%)	0	0	1	100%